



## Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Office of Highway Safety

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**Contact: Chuck Wolfe**  
[Chuck.Wolfe@ky.gov](mailto:Chuck.Wolfe@ky.gov)  
**502-564-3419**

**Erin Eggen**  
[Erin.Eggen@ky.gov](mailto:Erin.Eggen@ky.gov)  
**502-564-1438**

### **‘Click It or Ticket’ enforcement campaign begins**

*Motorists reminded to buckle up, enforcement heightened*

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Despite a wealth of data showing that seat belts save lives – and also despite implementation of a primary seat belt law – Kentucky’s 80 percent seat belt usage rate lags behind the national rate of 84 percent. The annual Click It or Ticket enforcement campaign, which runs from May 17 to June 6, will attempt to bring awareness to this issue as officers buckle down on those not buckled up.

Transportation Cabinet and Office of Highway Safety officials, along with the Kentucky State Police, launched the battle of the belt today at the Capitol. “Kentucky undoubtedly experiences far too many fatalities that could have been avoided with the simple use of a seat belt,” said Acting Secretary of Transportation Mike Hancock. “Clearly this is an indication that people are just not aware of the huge risk taken by not buckling up.”

Hancock said the cabinet is optimistic, with fatality numbers steadily decreasing each year. However, statistics for 2009 indicate 398 (61.3 percent) of the 649 people who were killed in motor vehicles last year were not wearing a seat belt. “We believe a majority of these lives could have been saved if they had been restrained.”

Traffic safety checkpoints and saturation patrols will be conducted by state and local law enforcement during the two-week Click It or Ticket mobilization, looking for any traffic violation with an emphasis on seat belt usage. Those not buckled up or who are in violation of other laws will receive a citation. But those who are buckled will receive a different kind of ticket – a “Click It FOR Tickets” voucher that allows them to register to win a pair of tickets to the Kentucky Speedway.

“Kentucky State Police will join with local law enforcement and the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety to support this national mobilization,” said Lt. Col. Mike Sapp, director of the KSP Operations Division. “We will implement an aggressive, high-

visibility enforcement plan to support this effort – so please, buckle up.”

Office of Highway Safety Executive Director Chuck Geveden says the office awarded more than \$240,000 in federal funds to 59 state and local police agencies across the Commonwealth to help bolster seat belt enforcement during the campaign. The funding is provided through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Although enforcement officers will be prevalent during the campaign, Geveden emphasized, “The Click It or Ticket campaign is not about writing tickets. It’s about awareness and saving lives. If one life is saved through this effort, it will be worth it.”

Frankfort Police Lt. Chuck Adams, who survived a crash last Nov. 13, spoke from first-hand experience about the lifesaving benefits of a seat belt. “I’m standing here today because I wore my seat belt,” Adams said. “As a police officer, I see people every day who aren’t restrained and who are severely injured or killed because of it. Anyone can be involved in a crash at any time – even police officers. I want all motorists to realize that the seat belt, if worn, will be there for you.”

According to the NHTSA, when worn correctly, seat belts are proven to reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat occupants by 45 percent – and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans.

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